



THE FIELDS OF PEACE

BY
CHARLES LEC SMITH

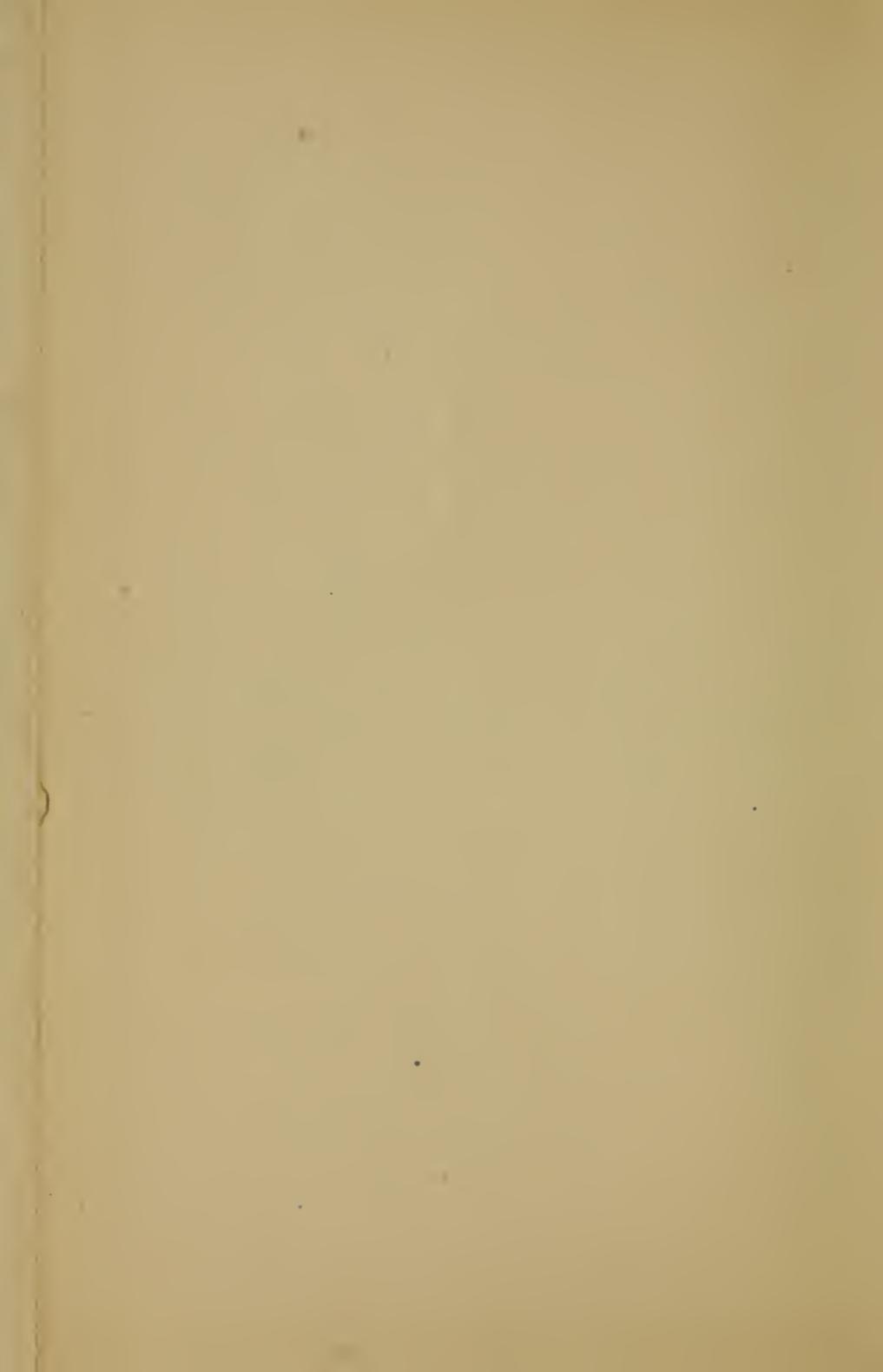


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THE FIELDS OF PEACE

POEMS AND BALLADS

EMMA FRANCES LEE SMITH



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THE FIELDS OF PEACE

THE FIELDS OF PEACE

Sometimes, it seems that life is very drear
For us, who mourn!

We cannot see the sunshine, sweet and clear;
We weep, forlorn.

We cannot lift our dull and weary eyes
From earth's deep gloom,
To where the hills of heavenly glory rise,
Beyond the tomb.

As in a trance of sadness still we lie
And cannot hear,
Like strains of angel music from the sky,
Those voices dear,

Of loved ones waiting in the mansions bright,
In God's fair lands,
Waiting, and calling to us through the night,
With beckoning hands!

When through the fields of peace they rove,
With saints at rest,
Do they not guard us with eternal love,
Those spirits blest?

Oh, some time there will be an end of pains,
Of grief and woe,
When God shall break for us our earthly chains,
And bid us go!

The Fields of Peace

Though long and lonely be the upward way,
It leads at last
To where there dawns a happy, golden day,
When life is past.

Though cold and dark the shadows over all,
When night is come,
We'll hear from out the dusk the call —
“ My child, come home ! ”

THE MOTHER IN HEAVEN

The Mother went down daily
To the great white gates,
Her wistful eyes turned eagerly adown the shining
strand;
Within her heart a mighty love,
A love that sweetly waits,
With meek and lowly patience on her blessed Lord's
command.

The throngs of hovering spirits
But newly come to rest
Beneath the promised shadow of the Father's bound-
less love,
Went by her, singing, onward
To their avocations blest,
From the peaceful groves of Heaven never, never
more to rove.

Oh, the fair, green plains of Heaven,
Where the crystal waters flow,
Where the light that is not sunlight,
Neither moon nor candle glow,
Shines across the Holy City,
Where the radiant mansions stand,
Ready builded for God's people,
Fashioned not by human hand!

Rank on rank, the happy spirits
Pass along the golden street;
Father, mother, friend, and lover,
Joyously they meet, and greet.

The Fields of Peace

These are they that out of sorrows,
Tribulations manifold,
Having come with great rejoicings,
Touch in praise their harps of gold.

Not as through a glass, so darkly,
Need they pierce the veil of space,
But forever hold sweet converse,
Hand to hand, and face to face!

She had so lately come to Heaven,
That gentle mother-soul,
She scarce had glimpsed the wonders of those dwell-
ings glorified;
Above the song of angel choirs
Still she seemed to hear the roll
Of those dark and cruel waters, of Death's melan-
choly tide.

Two little, smiling angels stood
Close by that Mother's side,
Their faces fair as morning light, their eyes of ten-
der blue;
“ Oh, Mother dear, why do you wait?
Oh, come!” they softly cried;
“ Have we not waited long for thee, thy little chil-
dren two?

“ For such a little while
To earth we came;
Scarce did we learn to smile,
And lisp thy name!

The Fields of Peace

“ In th’ circling arms of love
We lay so warm,
We had not time to prove
Earth’s dole and harm.

“ Soft eyes, and dark, bent head,
Sweet lips that smiled
Above our cradle-bed,
‘ My child, my child ! ’

“ Then a little space for pain,
For tears, for sighs,
God called us home — in vain
Your anguished cries !

“ With the little angels dear
In this fair land
We have waited many a year,
A happy band ;

“ But now our watch is o’er !
With spirits blest
On this celestial shore,
Sweet mother, rest ! ”

The Mother :

“ My little, little children dear,
Oh, forever blest am I
That God hath brought me safely to my heavenly
home, at last !
It is not meet that I should pine ;
In Heaven you hear no sigh,
There is no room for longing for the joys of earth,
now past !

The Fields of Peace

“ In Heaven there is no mourning,
No place for bitter tears;
Sweetly sounds the music of the angels’ holy songs;
Triumphantly the echoes ring,
Adown the mournful years,
And filling earth with harmony, to lighten human
wrongs.

“ But, children dear, the earth I left
Such a little while ago,
See how fair it blossoms with sweetest flowers of
May!
Yet still my spirit seems to hear
Sad sounds of grief and woe!
’Tis my lonely children, weeping — they are weep-
ing night and day!

The Flight of the Soul

“ The hours, so long, so slow!
So rough the way
The weary soul must go,
Ere breaks the day!

“ The Vale and Shade of Death!
A desert waste!
Of air, no faintest breath —
Oh, soul, make haste!

“ Beset by darkest fears,
And sounds of moans;
A mist of falling tears,
And heart-wrung groans!

The Fields of Peace

“ Fain would I stay awhile,
To break the gloom
With tender word and smile,
Across the tomb!

“ The sullen waters creep,
So still — so cold!
The banks, a rocky steep —
No hand to hold!

“ How can I cross the Vale,
How stem that tide,
Breasting the bitter gale,
With none to guide?”

A Voice:

“ Yea, though thou walkest through the Valley and
the Shadow of Death, thou shalt fear no
evil, for *I* will be with thee,
My rod and My staff they shall
Comfort thee!”

The Soul:

“ What music do I hear!
Light breaks ahead!
Lord, I no longer fear,
With Thee to tread!

“ Soon shall the anguish cease,
The soul be free!
I see the Gates of Peace —
My Savior — Thee!”

The Fields of Peace

Oh, happy soul, to win
The bitter fight,
With joy to enter in
Heaven's golden light;

Safe from pain and woe
To rest at last,
Where tears never flow,
Earth's trials past!

There came a host of spirits blest,
Beautiful, and bright and glad,
(The Mother scarce could look on them, so radiant
they did stand!)
Their robes were white and shining,
They were right fitly clad,
And crowned with golden glorioles, with waving
palms in hand.

The voice of this great multitude
Was like the sound of many waters;
Singing before the Throne of God a new and happy
song,
Oh, wonderful it was to see them,
Earth's rejoicing sons and daughters,
Casting their crowns before Him, redeemed from
sin and wrong!

Chorus of Saints:

“God shall wipe away all thy tears,
God shall comfort thee for all thy fears,
He shall make His face to shine upon thee,
Thou shalt be blest!

“ For we, who have triumphed over Death,
Oh, we, who seemed of all hope bereft,
 He hath brought us out of all our woes,
 We sweetly rest!

“ Oh, come and drink of the waters of Life!
Oh, come and rest after the dread strife;
 For God, Who sitteth on His Throne,
 Hath prepared thy home!

“ All things old shall become as new!
Thou who wert faithful, kind and true,
 Abide in peace in the shelter of God’s love!
 Oh, sister spirit, come!”

The Mother:

“ How can I take mine ease in Heaven,
And hear the angels sing,
How can I join these choristers, and worship God
 with praise,
When down upon the green, green earth,
They toil, still sorrowing,
All lonely, with no mother-love to fill the empty
 days?

“ Still would I hold them close —
Oh, close within my loving arms!
Is it too much to ask of God, Who loves His Only
 Son,
That I may still watch over them,
Amid earth’s rude alarms,
And see their sweet eyes gather hope, when mourn-
 ing days are done?”

The Fields of Peace

Came one from out the gleamy light
Gilding that angel band,
Of all that splendid, shining host, he was most fair
and bright;
“ Oh, pure and changeless mother-love!
I, too, have crossed Death’s strand,
And heard the sound of weeping roll upward
through the night!
“ Come now, thou sweetest mother,
For the Lord hath need of thee;
In the vast concourse of his saints none else may
take thy place;
Come look upon thy home prepared,
And all its wonders see,—
Blest reward for all thy services, thy life so full of
grace.
“ Behold the encircling cherubim
That ceaselessly do sing,
Adoring One Who sits enthroned, Lord of the quick
and dead!
The days and years of pious grief
Will heavenly comfort bring;
The Father of the fatherless will guard each bowèd
head.
“ Think not that here in Heaven
Earth’s pain is e’er forgot!
The patient Father surely counts each burning tear
that falls;
He hath balm for every anguish,
Rest thee, beloved, fear not!
The dear ones will be waiting, when at last the
Master calls!”

Song of Spirits:

“ Oh, hearken, all ye mourners who sit beside the tomb,
So early in the morning
Come to look upon your dead!
See, the places where ye laid them — behold, there
is no room
For the burden of your sorrow,
And the fruitless tears ye shed!

“ For the stone that shut the passage is forever
rolled aside!
The Angel of Glad Tidings
Sits within the garden fair.
The souls ye love are happy now, with Christ the
Crucified;
They bid you speed your earthly task,
And strive to meet them there!”

The Mother bent a last swift glance
Across that shoreless sea,
Which mortal eyes can never glimpse, nor human
knowledge span
Its tireless sweep, its changeless flow,
Its endless mystery,—
The Sea of Death, whose waves are fed by ceaseless
tears of man.

Then filled with holy ecstasy,
Kneeling, she made her prayer:
“ Now lettest thou thy servant, Lord, forever do
thy will!

The Fields of Peace

Through all the years of mortal life,
In days of want and care,
Thou hast been strong to comfort me — be thou
my helper still!

“Look down from out this golden light
Veiling thy glorious face;
Regard that little, humble spot, so small in earth’s
vast range!
Encircle with thy mighty love
That dear and lowly place!
Send thou thy blessed angels the dark days of grief
to change!

“So many and so grievous
Are the burdens they must bear
Who toil along earth’s rugged paths! Oh, give
them daily strength!
Give them the courage that they need
All human woes to dare!
And after life’s long exile, Lord, oh, bring them
home at length!”

Was it the sound of music sweet
Swelling in glorious strains?
Or a great voice out of Heaven, saying: “God
shall wipe away all tears,
There shall be no more of crying,
No more of grief and pain;
The souls of those who faithful were shall reign
through endless years.”

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The Fields of Peace

The little, smiling angels
Had soft eyes of starry ray;
They lifted up their harps of gold, they sang with
tuneful breath;
And through the gates of Heaven pealed,
Along the Shining Way,
Glad anthems of redeemed souls that had conquered
Sin and Death!

How triumphant is the union
Of souls alike so pure!
There are on earth no words to tell the rapture of
that joy!
Oh, the bliss, to dwell in Heaven,
In a peace that shall endure
Through eternities of happiness, that Time can not
destroy!

Though still beneath the misty spheres
The mourning children stray,
They watch the sunset's glory, they dream of Heaven's
fair land,
Where some time they shall meet again
In the golden light of day,
Those gentle spirits, waiting now beyond the Shining
Strand.

And the glory and the mystery
Of that life beyond the skies,
In visions full of rapture fill the silence of earth's
night;

The Fields of Peace

Like the odors of sweet incense
From the golden bowls that rise—
The prayers and patience of the saints, before the
Throne of Light.

Song of the Children:

“Blessèd spirits, leave us never!
As by crystal streams ye wander,
In the shining heavenly mazes,
High and holy themes to ponder,
Interspersed with grateful praises,
Ye who loved us, love us ever!

“If in paths of sin we tread,
Will ye, from God’s Paradise,
By the light of love divine,
Looking down with tender eyes,
Shed a blessing all benign,
That no more we fear or dread?

“Here on earth we walk apart!
In the sunset, in the twilight,
Let us glimpse thy loving faces;
Come to us in dreams of midnight,
Comfort us with warm embraces!
Still abide within each heart!”

THE HEART OF THE CHILD

The heart of the child, it never grows old!
Though life may darken, and love grow cold
As the hoar-frost on the garden mold,
 In autumn weather;
Yet ever within it lingers fair,
And nothing in life can aught impair
The childish faith that is nourished there,
 For years together.

Whatever of fortune or trial may come,
In crowded city, or humble home;
Wherever our careless footsteps roam,
 From youth to age;
Whatever of worldly and frivolous lore,
From the book of life we may eagerly store,
As we con its chapters o'er and o'er,
 Each blotted page;

Yet, fresh and pure as the hidden rill,
In the forest deep, 'neath the ferny hill,
Where woodland creatures drink their fill
 Of its limpid tide;
So the love of the child is forever young,
And sweet as the source from which it sprung,
From the mother-heart and the mother-tongue,
 Its gentle guide.

Oh, mother mine, when my breath shall cease,
And the pallid form lies low, in peace,
Cold from the shock of its glad release
From mortal pain;
The soul of your child as it takes its flight,
Shall pierce the murk of death's brooding night,
And join you there in the golden light,
A child again!

“ AND MARTHA SERVED ”

“ Lord, may not I, too, share in that good part
For which the mild-eyed Mary thou dost bless?
Behold, the many cares upon my heart
That hourly press!

“ I cannot leave undone my humble task;
This little home, with all its scanty gear,
The usance of my ready hands doth ask,
In service dear.

“ A simple woman am I, Lord, and know
No arts to charm, but only how to serve;
My sister Mary hath soft eyes, aglow,
That never swerve

“ From thy benign and lofty face; but, Lord,
I would that sometimes I might kneel awhile,
Forgetting all my tasks, to hear thy word,
To see thy smile!

“ But here are hungry ones that I must feed,—
So much to do, so little time to spare
From the dull round of daily haunting need,
So much of care!

“ I am so hurried all the livelong day,
I have not time to sit and learn of thee!
Carest thou not that thus I toil alway
So busily?

“ Yet, Lord, I pray thee, teach me how to find,
With thy divine compassion from above,
Surcease from cumbering services, that blind
Mine eyes to Love!”

THE WIDOW OF NAIN

The Widow of Nain went forth in grief,
Her heart was spent with woe;
Before her was borne a shrouded form,
On a litter, poor and low.

Out and beyond the gate of Nain,
To his last and long repose,
To the carved tomb in the rocky wall,
The son of his mother goes.

Around her friends and neighbors wept,
And mingled their cries with hers;
'Tis sweet in the hour of bereavement,
To share the mourner's tears!

The Fields of Peace

Oh, the sun shone bright in Galilee,
As the Lord came over the way;
And the many around him wept to see
Such a blot on the gladsome day.

“ ‘Tis the only son of his mother, Lord,
And she a widow lone;
Oh, who can comfort and solace bring,
As she weeps for her son, who is gone?”

The Lord beheld that mother’s tears,
With compassion and love divine;
And they that bore the bier stood still,
At the blessed Master’s sign.

“ Weep not,” said the Lord to the Widow of Nain,
And sweet was the glance of his eyes;
And he came and touched the lowly bier,—
“ Young man, I say, arise!”

And there came a mighty fear on all,
As the dead arose from his shroud;
“ God hath visited his people here!”
Low murmured the wondering crowd.

Oh, widows of Nain, the wide world over,
Take comfort, and cease your cries!
For the sons that are dead shall live again,
With the Lord in Paradise!

FAITH RENEWED

How the sun glints upon this scarlet leaf!
This world's a very pleasant place to stray!
Whilst yesterday the home of sodden grief,
Faith's alchemy hath changed its mien to-day!

Last eve I said: "There is no room for joy
Within this crowded prison-house of life!"
Dark, sordid cares did my sick soul employ
To fill my heart with melancholy rife.

But in the quiet of the peaceful night
I cast aside my day-time woes and fears;
The morning brings its sweet and rosy light,
To shame mine eyes for all their senseless tears.

The friend who yesterday had seemed so cold,
To-day presents a smiling visage fair,
And joins in merry jesting, as of old;
And straightway I my misery forswear.

Oh, what a sunlit, musical old earth!
Would that men might forever dwell serene
And cheerful, having time for wholesome mirth,
Free from the fret of treason, spite and spleen!

God sets his rainbow 'gainst life's blackest cloud,
And bids us lift our eyes, and learn to trace
Beyond the mists and vapors that enshroud
Our vision, the bright glory of His face.

THE ANGEL OF DEATH

So long the silent angel stood,
With dark, unsmiling eyes,
 And wings that swept the shadows
Within their dusky fold ;
Stood ever on the threshold,
As one who seeks his prize,
 And sees beneath his downward gaze
A world grown cold.

“ Oh, come not, cruel angel !
Here is no room for thee !
 Leave us in quiet hopefulness
A little longer still !
Are there not others waiting
And longing to be free ?
 Oh, angel of dark omen,
Is this God’s will ? ”

The angel stood and listened
In sad and mournful guise ;
 The darkling of his awful face
Was very strange to see !
In bitter woe and anguish
Arose those broken cries —
 Those age-worn cries of sorrow,
And agony !

The Fields of Peace

“ Twice have we seen thee lurking,
Unbending, pale and grim,
Hov’ring with wings of darkness
Outside our chamber door!
We gave thee up one dear one,
In the night hours sad and dim —
Canst thou not pass us over,
And come no more? ”

Slow dragged the heavy night-tide,
And still the angel bent,
But on his face there grew a light,
Like to the morning clear!
It pierced the brooding shadows,
The veil of flesh was rent —
He bore away a gentle soul,
A mother dear!

COULD WE BUT KNOW!

Do roses bloom above the shining portal
Of thy celestial home?
And wondrous birds, choiring songs immortal,
On bright, fleet pinions roam?

Do soft winds waft across the vernal hills
Rich perfumes, sweet and rare?
Hast thou forgot earth's poverty and ills,
In blest surcease from care?

What holier songs than those that here we know,
Dost thou sing sweetly now?
What smiles, more radiant than the sunshine's glow,
Suffuse with joy thy brow?

The dear hands that no idle moments knew,
Swift in their daily task,
What duties doth the Master give to you?
What gracious service ask?

Along the banks of that calm-flowing stream,
Whose waves glide crystal-clear,
Hast thou fulfilment of each earthly dream,
With friends long gone, and dear?

THE HEAVENLY VISION

Here in mine own hired house I dwell,
An old man, bowed and worn
With toil, and the stress of a life far spent,
Of earthly honors shorn.

This mailèd soldier, who shares my chain,
Knoweth the stripes I bear,
And the hidden thorn in my shrinking flesh,
That burdens oft my prayer.

But at eventide, when the shadows fold
O'er the templed hills of Rome,
My dim eyes watch for a vision fair,
That fills this humble home.

And I marvel much, as the glory slips
Adown the purple sky,
That the Lord of Heaven and Earth did save
A sinner such as I!

On the long highway that led to Damascus,
How hot the white sand lay!
And the sun in the blazing firmament
Beat down on th' thistles gray.

In the strength of a stern and haughty will
My chariot train I drove:
"I am Saul, of Tarsus, whom all men fear!
No human power can save

The Fields of Peace

“ Man or woman, aged or young,
Lowly, of high degree,
Who worship the Christ of th’ shameful cross,
And humbly bow the knee !

“ What though on their slain and risen Lord
These wretches boldly call ?
In th’ Book of the Law it is written plain,
That Jehovah ruleth all ! ”

And I verily thought in my perverse mind,
I, Saul, the Pharisee,
That the mission of death I was set upon
Would bring me sanctity.

So I pressed with haste on my furious course,
From morn till noonday bright,
When lo ! like a flash from the brazen sky,
There shone a splendid light !

Then I fell to the ground, my burning eyes
Of eager sight bereft ;
The shell of my hardened heart was pierced,
As though a sword it cleft.

And there came a Voice, that spake my name
In accents sad and low ;
’Twas the voice of the gentle Nazarene,
To me, His vanquished foe !

Friends, have I not told what the Master said
On that Damascus road ?
“ Saul, Saul ! ” said the Voice, “ ’tis hard for thee
To kick against the goad ! ”

The Fields of Peace

Trembling and mazed in my blindness there —
“Lord, what wouldst have me do?”

I, Saul of Tarsus, the Pharisee,
The persecuting Jew!

And the Voice bade me rise and follow on
To the city near at hand;
There for three days long, without food or drink
Awaiting His command,

I stripped my soul of its sin and pride,
And bent my knees in prayer;
And ever the light of the Vision shone
Across the darkness there.

Thenceforth, through dangers by land and sea,
Obedient to that Sign,
I have fought the good fight, have kept the faith,
Its triumph shall be mine!

Though the tyrant’s threat of a martyr’s death
My soul ofttimes desponds,
Yet I would the wide world were such as I,
Except these bonds — these bonds!

“COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE”

“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,
Saith your God.”

Yea, though thou makest us in pain to feel
Thy chastening rod!

“Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem,
Cry unto her —”

Lo, where she sitteth in haughty scorn,
And hath no fear!

“She hath received of the Lord’s hand double
For all her sin!”

Thou, Lord, alone hast might and power
Hard hearts to win!

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
‘Prepare ye the way!’”

Yea, Lord, we hearken to him, and are glad
This glorious day!

“Make ye straight in the desert a highway
For our God!”

Turn Thou our footsteps into ways of joy;
Weary, we plod!

“Every valley shall be exalted, each mountain height
And hill made low.”

Oh, make pleasant for us the rugged paths
Wherein we go!

The Fields of Peace

“ The glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
All flesh shall see ! ”

As the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it,
So shall it be !

“ The voice said, ‘ Cry ! ’ What shall I cry ?
All flesh is grass ! ”

Its goodliness is as the flower of the field,
A withered mass !

“ The grass withereth, the flower fadeth,
But God’s word stands ! ”

Yea, even shall its glory pierce the darkness
Of heathen lands !

“ Oh, Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings,
Lift up thy voice ! ”

From the high places, singing as the cherubim,
We shall rejoice !

“ Behold, the Lord God cometh, with a strong hand,
His arm shall rule ! ”

As of old, in Eden in the Garden walking,
In the evening cool !

“ He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,
Them gently lead ! ”

As a flock that scattereth with none to guide,
Thy help we need !

“ Who hath measured the waters in the hollow
Of his hand ? ”

Thou, who hast weighed the mountains, and meted
Earth with a span !

“ Who hath directed the Spirit of Jehovah,
Or hath taught him? ”
In paths of justice hath he showed us the way,
Since ages dim.

“ Behold, he taketh up as a very little thing
Isles of the sea! ”
Nations of the earth to him are as the small dust,
And vanity!

“ To whom shall ye liken God, or what likeness
To him compare? ”
Not unto graven images, wrought with cunning art,
With chasing rare!

“ Hath it not been told you from the beginning,
Hast thou not known? ”
Yea, Thou hast been our help in all generations,
And years long gone!

“ It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth,
The heavens out-spread! ”
Before him, the nations are as grasshoppers,
And as the dead!

“ Yea, they shall not be planted, yea, they
Shall not be sown! ”

We are as stubble withered in the summer heat,
By whirlwinds blown.

“ To whom shall ye liken me, or shall I be equal?
Saith the Holy One.”

Thou callest us by name, thou art strong in power,
There faileth none!

The Fields of Peace

“ Even the young shall faint and be weary,
And youth shall fall ! ”
Shall we not mount up with wings, as eagles?
On God we call !

THE WANING YEAR

Bright o'er each silent tomb,
The autumn leaves are flying;
Soft through the branches bare,
The autumn winds are sighing;
Safe housed from earthly storms
The sacred dead are lying,
So peacefully !

Swiftly the seasons roll,
Once gay with homely cheer;
Gone are days of joy,
Blest by a presence dear;
Fond memories closely throng,
Darkly sets the waning year —
So drearily !

God keep us in His love !
Guide ever kind and meek,
Over the lonely road,
Safeguard our footsteps weak !
Help us from mortal woes,
Life's highest good to seek,
So hopefully !

FOR THIS ONE DAY!

Give us the yearnings of a little child,
This one day in the year,
That we may rest from earth's harsh tumults wild,
And have no fear!

Let us see visions of the Babe that slept
In th' lowly manger dim,
Where Joseph and the gentle Mary kept
Watch over him!

Let us hear angels singing in the night,
And see that shining star
Guiding the Wise-men by its amber light,
From lands afar!

If we had gold and frankincense and myrrh,
Gifts sweet and rare to bring,
Would we not lay them, our cold hearts astir,
Before our King?

If we were shepherds on some lonely plain,
Would not our hearts rejoice
To see the glory of the heavenly train,
To hear God's voice?

What was that song the blessed angels sang,
So long, so long ago?
"Peace and good will!" the joyful anthem rang,
On earth below.

Oh, holy angels, let us hear again,
Above sad sounds of strife,
Above the anguish of poor dying men,
That song of life!

A MOTHER'S THOUGHTS OF HER DEAD CHILD

When the slow tears of sorrow cease to fall,
And fitful gleams of sunlight pierce the gloom;
When the pale snowdrop puts forth timid bloom,
And from afar I hear the robin's call;

When earth again seems fair, with glint of joy
After sad days when Grief made haste to bring,
Cold in her earthen cup of chastening,
Those bitter draughts that erst sweet hopes destroy;

Oh, think not that thy memory grows less dear,
Because sometimes I join in sudden mirth,
And yield to laughter, with the jocund earth,
Finding brief solace in gay words of cheer!

For underneath a guise of careless ease,
Sweet thoughts of thee run, like a silver thread
Of starlight through the dusk of evening shed,
And with their holy calm my grief appease.

Ofttimes when the dear children at my knee
Put up their tiny hands in soft caress,
I seem to feel thy baby fingers press;
In their bright eyes thy lovely smile I see.

The Fields of Peace

And all thy life of gentle, girlish grace
Casts its divine reflection down the years
Wherein ye walked, untroubled by vain fears,
The light of lofty purpose on thy face.

For thy sake do I love all tender youth,
All happy things that laugh and lift glad eyes,
Singing with rapture for the joy that lies
In hearts all innocent of sin and ruth.

Now shall I not give humble thanks and praise
That God, Who knoweth that His way is best,
So gently called thee to thy heavenly rest,
That the world's sorrow darkened not thy days?

Time, that bringeth healing on his wings,
Hath also in his hands the gift of peace;
Oh, gift divine, that bids our mourning cease,
And to the bruised heart sweet comfort brings!

Now I no longer tremble when thy name
In sisters' converse, in low accents slips
Soft through the guarded portals of their lips,
Lest, hearing, I should call out in wild blame!

For thy dear memory ever doth abide
In the close circle of this pleasant home,
An angel guest, whose furled wings never
roam,—
My little girl, my little girl who died!

DRESSERS OF THE WILDERNESS

“ . . . That, however fallen from the purity or far from the peace of Eden . . . they will . . . dress and keep the wilderness, though they no more can dress and keep the garden.”

(RUSKIN.)

“ ‘ Dressers of the wilderness ’ are we,
Women who toil from early morn till night,
While others keep the gardens fair and sweet,
Whose paths are soft as yielding velvet to their feet,
And golden sunshine makes their whole world
bright,

While we — we keep the dusty wilderness ! ”

Out in the spaces of the wilderness,

Ye pale ones, laden with your homely care,
Come there not strains of music to your ears,
Come there not visions rapturous, to calm your
fears,

Visions that glow and burn with beauty rare,
Making a glory in your wilderness ?

“ Yea, visions such as holy angels ever see,
Come shining down the vista of sad years,
Till all the lonely wastes, the by-ways of despair,
Are paths of splendor, leading to that fair

Sweet realm of bliss, beyond this haunt of tears,
Beyond the confines of this wilderness ! ”

Brave keepers of the barren wilderness,

To you full soon shall come the blessed even-tide,
When as the lengthening shadows purple fall,
The Master of the Garden Fair shall stand, and
call :

“ Behold, the gates are open — open wide !
Come in and rest, tired daughters of the wilder-
ness ! ”

TO MY FATHER

December 11, 1910

Far in the West, where the dark pines wave,
And the snow-crowned mountains stand,
You are resting now in a quiet grave,
In a sad and lonely land.

No child e'er comes to cast sweet flowers,
Or filial tears to shed ;
And bleak are the winter's empty hours,
In that city of the dead.

But never the year creeps dully by,
Till December's days grow drear,
But my restless heart sends forth a cry,
And mourns for my father dear !

Oh, sweet was the light of your beautiful face,
As you taught me the lessons of truth ;
And straight was the path in the ways of grace,
Where you guided the steps of youth !

Calmly you stood mid the tumult and noise,
The stress and the battle of life,
Pointing the way to those heavenly joys
That beckon beyond the strife !

Riches and honors passed you by
As you plodded your narrow way ;
And now with the saints that reign on high
In Heaven's eternal day,

Your soul is safe from all worldly fears,
The heartbreak of earth's cold scorning;
The dust shall await the end of the years —
Glad resurrection's morning!

THE QUERY — WHY?

Ofttimes one, musing through the city streets,
Doth dimly glimpse in faces that one meets,
The thin, worn look of hunger or despair,
The hopeless apathy, the burdened air,
That can but mean the endless query, "Why,
O Lord of sorrowing ages,
Why?"

"Why hast thou brought us to this maze of pain,
This cold and scornful world, where heartless Gain
In panoply of splendor mocks our woes;
And, lapped in luxury, sweet Beauty goes
Along glad ways of smiling plenty, and,
Seeing our misery, scarce wonders —
‘Why?’"

It seems but yesterday that in the early morn
We rose to chant the day when Christ was born.
He came to cleanse the world from sin,
From guilt and shame men's wilful hearts to win;
He died that all might have eternal life,
Yet still they question, dully,
“Why?”

The Fields of Peace

Oh, those poor, pale faces, how they gloom
And darken, like dim spectres from the tomb!
 Shall not those questioning lips some time be
 stilled?
 Shall not those empty hands at length be filled?
When the great day of wrath shall dawn,
 How shall we answer that eternal
 “Why?”

If in His stead we have not wrought our part,
With ceaseless zeal to ease each troubled heart,
 The tears our negligence has caused to flow,
 Shall swell the waters of that stream of woe,
That in a flood high mounting up to God,—
 Think not 'twill drown His awful query,
 “Why?”

HAD WE ONLY KNOWN!

Had we only known of the secret grief
That smouldered and burned, without relief,
In the soul of the man, as he scoffed and jeered,
We might have spoken a loving word —
But we did not know!

Had we given a thought to the mortal pain
That rent his heart and seared his brain,
Had we guessed the anguish, the sordid care,
We might have saved him from despair!

But we did not think!

Had we only heard, 'neath the idle jest,
The cry of a soul in its sad unrest,
We might have healed the wounded pride
Of an erring brother "for whom Christ died!"

But we did not hear!

So we let him go to his sudden doom —
No love to lighten the gathering gloom —
No prayer to speed his parting breath —
No hand to close his eyes in death —
We let him go!

But this we believe: In that lonely hour,
God, manifest in love and power,
Cleansed that soul of its shame and sin,
And Heaven's gate opened to let him in!

This we believe!

SUPPLICATION

Grant me, O God, the grace to be
Brave and unfearing on the lonely way,
That upward path that leads to day
Eternal, and to Thee, my Lord, to Thee!

Give me the courage just to face
From day to day the world of toil,
The tedious round, wherein we moil,
With deeds of tenderness to grace.

What greater gift can mortal ask,
Than just to comfort those who weep,
To strengthen feeble steps that creep,
Stumbling beneath the day-long task?

If but one word or look of mine
Can bring some troubled soul the light,
The hope to gild life's darkest night,
Reflecting Thee, oh, may it shine!

THE CROWN

In splendor sets the sun, full-orbed and red ;
The clouds are tinged with many a lovely hue,—
Pale shades of violet, and gold and blue,
Soft rose, and mauve, and tender green, as trees
When first they put forth sprays the spring to greet.

Like to the very gates of Heaven they gleam,
Those clouds that float and screen the dying day ;

The Fields of Peace

And far below, the peaceful city lay,
In Sabbath stillness, free from noise and fret,
Fair with the sweet reflection of those glowing
clouds.

A circle like a glorious golden crown,
I see above the hilltops, o'er the height,
E'en as I gaze upon that shining sight;
Red-gold, and pointed like a royal diadem,
Fit for the forehead of the Heavenly King.

Radiant it hangs, and glows with crimson fire.
What angel bands this mystic message bringing,
What unseen choir its holy vespers singing,
Stand throned upon the evening's dying splendors,
That I may have this glimpse of Heaven's glory?

Is it to typify the crown for which
My soul must ever strive, till all of life is past?
A crown like to the golden circlets that they cast
Down at the feet of God, those dear and blessed
saints,

For whom not yet our tears have ceased to flow,
Because they come not back, to cheer us on our way?

Oh, golden gates of Heaven, far and fair,
In all the glory of thy beauty, open, open wide!
Stoop ever from that splendor, dear Christ, Who
died

To point the way to me — even me — that crown
to win,
That shining marvel that I saw aloft,
And took it for the emblem of my after-life,
All golden with the light of dying day!

IN THE VINEYARD

Daily into the vineyard I must go,
There working at the task my lord hath set;
'T is not for me the reason now to know
Why all day long I toil, with sad eyes wet,
Heavy with tears, because I labor so!

Around me throng the laborers, newly hired,
Eager to taste the rosy vintage sweet;
Gaily they pluck the fruit, with hands untired,
And when the day is done, on sandaled feet
Homeward they hasten, by new hopes inspired.

“ Oh, Master, we who toiled from early morn,
Have we not rights o'er those who worked one
hour?

The heat and burden of the day we've borne,
Nor rested once in shady garden bower,
Nor in the fields amid the golden corn!

“ See all the vintage in a purple stream,
We've trodden in the wine-press! On its tide
Full many a precious hope, full many a dream
Upon its crimson flood hath floated wide,
And sunk from sight beneath the sun's last beam!

“ And shall we not be paid in double store,
Who thus all day have plodded at our task?
Wrought at the wine-press with hands red and sore?
Is it too much, this guerdon that we ask,
To give us but a paltry penny more?”

The Fields of Peace

“ Peace, friend, receive thy promised wage, one pence :

O'er that which is mine own shall I not still
Have power, to give or to withhold ? Go hence !
Behold the many empty hands to fill !
Shall I not use them, lest they work offense ?

“ For idle in the crowded market-place
These laborers stood, who work but one short
hour ;

I saw and marked each hungry, pallid face ;
With hopeless agony they seemed to lower,
They were my brothers, of my father's race !

“ ‘ Why stand ye idle, and life's task thus shirk ? ’
To this one, and to that, I made appeal ;
‘ Oh, master, no man giveth us to work !
To beg we are ashamed — we dare not steal —
So here within the market-place we lurk ! ’

“ ‘ Go ye into my vineyard, labor there
One hour, or two, — it matters not ! ’ I said ;
‘ A penny, or a half-pence, — what is fair,
Shall be thy wage, when the fierce heat is sped
And breezes from the hilltops cool the air.’

“ Friend, who hath faithful been to me, and true,
Repine not thus because I seek to bring
Hope to the hopeless, even as once to you,
What time I found you lone and sorrowing,
And sought to give you balm instead of rue ! ”

The Fields of Peace

Shame-faced, I knelt before my gracious lord,
And took the penny that his hand bestowed;
I could not utter one low, halting word,
But rose and went down to my dear abode;
With deep humility my soul was stirred.

Oft in my heart the mystery I turn,
Of human destiny, its sorry fate;
How some the tasks of life so idly spurn,
Whilst others stand outside the vineyard gates,
And with despair their lives consume and burn!

In the sweet vineyard, or the market-place,
The wisdom of the Master knoweth best;
He hath regard unto each piteous case;
Whilst some must work, to some he giveth rest;
No troubled soul to him is poor or base!

IN SYRIA

I dream of the blue of Syrian skies,
Of white ships at the shore;
Of sun-browned faces and bright dark eyes,
And a black tent's open door.

I hear the pipe of the shepherd bold,
As he calls his sheep by name,
And leads them down to the distant fold,
Through the sunset's scarlet flame.

And faint sweet laughter thrills the air,
Up from the cool well's brink;
Is it Rebekah, slim and fair,
Who draws for the flocks to drink?

Now over the desert's tawny rim
The stately camels tread;
Weird shadows flit thro' the twilight dim;
The evening star glows red.

Ah, what care I for the mist and the snow,
In this land of wintry wind,
When on drifting pinions my glad dreams go,
Happy and unconfin'd,

To dwell mid the palms and cedars gray
Of Lebanon's storied height,
Where a thousand years are but as a day,
Or a watch in a starry night!

THE LITTLE SHEPHERD BOY

Said the little shepherd boy,
 Mid the dark Judean hills:
“ Father, what sound of joy
 The desert spaces fills? ”
“ Hush, my child, and sleep!
‘ Tis but the bells of the sheep.”

“ Father, I see white wings
 As of angels in swift flight,
And a silvery radiance flings
 Its glory across the night! ”
“ It is the trail of a star
Falling from worlds afar.”

“ Oh, the shadowy shapes that flit
 Adown the desert’s rim —
On giant beasts they sit,
 All robed in garments dim! ”
“ Child, cease thine idle talk!
‘ Tis the lean wolves that stalk.”

“ But, father, I hear a cry
 As of a babe that weeps,
Like to our little Amzi,
 When my weary mother sleeps! ”
“ The wind of the desert, child,
It moans through the brambles wild.”

“ Oh, father! Do lilies bloom
 At midnight’s dismal hour?
Whence comes that sweet perfume,
 Like the fragrance of a flower? ”

“ ‘Tis the cedar on the hill.
My little son, lie still!”

The little shepherd lad
Under his blanket crept;
Strange were the dreams he had
Of a lovely Babe that slept
Encircled by a ring
Of angels, worshiping!

THE LITTLE SON

I

My little son, on his mother’s breast,
Of babes new-born the fairest one,
So late by angel-hands caressed,
My little son!

His tender feet so soon to run
Along rough ways where mine have pressed,—
Oft weary ’neath the guerdons won;

Soft-sheltered in Love’s perfumed nest,
His little life but now begun,
I take on me his fate, half-guessed,
My little son!

II

So fair thou art, as an opening flower
Reveals in the dawning its rosy heart,
Pure and fresh in its garden bower,
So fair thou art!

And sweet as the incense set apart
For use in some solemn and holy hour,
A flame on a sacred shrine to start.

More precious than gold or earthly dower,
Or wealth of the world in its gilded mart,
Rank, or bright fame, or mighty power,
So fair thou art!

III

I make this prayer to the Lord of Light,
For my little son, as he slumbers there,
That he may be strong to walk aright,
I make this prayer!

With a soul as pure as his form is fair,
A heart with all knightly graces dight,
And a courage high, without dole or care.

So may he be clothed upon with might,
With an armor of virtue beyond compare,
To turn away arrows of scorn and spite,
I make this prayer!

IV

So short the time God gave us thee!
Sweet bells had scarcely rung their chime
To greet thee, ere thy soul went free,
So short the time!

Midst flowers that grace our sunny clime,
We weep, thy tiny form to see
As still and cold as winter's rime.

But in the heavenly fields may be
Space for thy growth to angel prime,
Though still we whisper mournfully:
" So short the time! "

V

It is God's will! What need for tears,
Seeing thee lie so sweet and still,
At ease through all the shadowy years?
It is God's will!

What dreams the eternal silence fill,
Free from all taint of mortal fears,
Such as our bruised memories thrill!

Undying love fore'er endears
Thy name. Nor can dull Grief's mute chill
Darken the heaven-born hope that cheers;
It is God's will!

THE SOUL'S QUEST

Life, how can you ask of me song or praise,
Or a glad refrain along flowery ways?

For you have been to me a task-mistress grim,
You have made harsh for me all my days!

In the dawn of youth, when the world was dim,
My heart was a fountain filled to the brim

With the vintage rare of a purpose true;
And I drank it deep from the shining rim.

The earth was gay and the skies were blue;
My glad young soul few sorrows knew;

You smiled on me, Life, with a tender smile!
Nothing dreamed I of the wormwood and rue

I should drink and pluck, bewailing the while
The dreary road that for many a mile

Led far away from the fountain of youth;
Ah, happy was I, without fear or guile!

But all too soon came the bitter truth,
To pierce my soul with its pain and its ruth!

With your light laughter and scornful glee
You offered no bribe to me then, forsooth!

God gave me clear eyes that were keen to see
The glory and beauty of things fair and free;

But you turned on me, Life, a mocking face —
“Oh, splendid my guerdon, but not for thee!”

The Fields of Peace

Then I set my soul the high task to trace
A worthy course in this mortal race;
 Despite the lures of your artful pride,
I would walk upright, with conquering grace!

Swift were my thoughts, as white ships that ride
O'er the sparkling waves of the ocean's tide;

 I would bring to the sad and sorrowful world
Some gift to brighten, some hope to guide!

But in passionate storms my soul was whirled,
Beaten and bruised and downward hurled
 From the heights where in peace it fain would
 rest,
Like a weary seabird, with wings close furled.

But ever my soul renewed its far quest,
And forth to its destiny eagerly pressed;
 I turned me, Life, from the light of your eyes,
 Whose false bright glances my soul caressed!

Then I bade my soul seek a sweeter prize
Than the baubles you offered in treacherous guise,
 When first my longing senses stirred
 At the hest of your soft and luring cries.

Oh, sweet and low as the song of the bird
In the first faint blush of springtime heard,
 Calling and cooing to its hidden mate
 In its nest in the swaying, shadowy verd!

The Fields of Peace

I cleansed my soul of all vengeful hate,
I made it fair, in right royal state,
 Pure from all taint of pride and scorn,
And strong to endure the thrusts of fate.

Through peaceful channels my soul is borne,
For we sailed away in the rose of morn,
 To seek new life 'neath a kindlier sky,
No longer the cheat of a fate forlorn.

Fair are the lands where my soul and I
Put in to rest as the night draws nigh;
 And swift is our boat in its joyous flight;
Straight to its goal, as the gray gulls fly,

It wings its way o'er the foam-caps white,
Oh, happy way, to the Isles of Light,
 The Blessed Islands where loved ones dwell,
Beyond the stars, where there is no night!

“A LITTLE WHILE!”

“A little while!” Beloved, do not fear
Because thy broken life seemeth so drear,
Though thy bright hopes, like wounded birds,
 have flown,
Thy love’s sweet blossoms in the dust lie prone,
And death’s cold hand hath plucked thy heart’s
 Most Dear;

Yet through the silence comes not to thine ear
(As though thy dear love stoopeth ever near)
A voice that stilleth thy despairing moan:
“A little while!”

God sendeth sorrow, and He giveth cheer;
His love enfoldeth e’en the mournful bier;
’Twas His strong angels rolled away the stone
 In that sad Garden where was laid His Own—
Beloved, list ye to the promise clear:
“A little while!”

THE DEAF

To those for whom the gates of sound
Have softly shut, that now they dwell
Aloof, as in some lonely cell
Where never more glad sounds resound;

Where never more youth's tuneful mirth
Makes music through the golden days,
And never more in chants of praise,
Their voices greet the year's new birth;

Give pity, as they stand apart
In wistful musings, whilst swift life
Stirs round them, quick with pain and strife,
Or bright with hopes that warm the heart!

Yet mid earth's turmoil and its frets,
Patient they bide, and, hearing not
Harsh tongues with human passions hot,
Their quiet knows no vain regrets.

What hallowed memories throng and press
Those peaceful halls of silence through,
With noiseless tread, and eyes that woo,
And gentle hands that soothe and bless!

HAMPDEN-SIDNEY COLLEGE
VIRGINIA

Shades of the dim and hallowed Past, I thee invoke!
Bring to my vision scenes of long ago,
When mid these groves of beauty moved and spoke
Loved ones, long sleeping 'neath the grasses low
In graves far distant! May their spirits shed
A blessing on my bowed and reverent head!

Across yon campus green I seem to see
Gay troops of slender youths, with shout and song
Meeting and greeting; in their boyish glee
With jest and frolic seeking to prolong
The days that pass too swiftly in their flight,
Too soon engulfed in shadow-haunted night!

There dreamed our fathers, in those storied halls,
Of faith and honor, and of high renown;
They heard afar Life's silver clarion-call,
Their young eyes visioned bright the victor's crown;
They saw, in splendor like a Holy Grail,
The future miraged on that starry trail.

The ancient oaks that crown the flower-decked hill,
How oft the murmur of their rustling leaves
Chanted th' eternal song of youth! And still,
Magic its warp and woof of romance weaves,
Along th' embowered paths, in shaded groves,
Where sweethearts met, and bright eyes told of
love!

The Fields of Peace

Blest are the memories of an elder day,
So eloquent of youth and manhood's grace!
Treading alone the world's rough, toilsome way,
The grateful offspring of a godly race,
I bring oblations, and renew with tears
The vows of constancy, the hopes of years!
(1843-1913.)

LES HUGUENOTS

Who is this, riding so fast, so far?
Bartolomée of th' Mount!
He has fixed his course by a silver star;
Though he bears the sword of a man of war,
Though he wears the dress of a King's Hussar,
His heart-beats one might count!

The Huguenot, Bartolomée,
A soldier of fair name,
Has a sword so keen to smite its way
Through the ranks of foes, that in a fray
Its swift stroke oft has won the day,
With honor and high fame.

These are days of peril for all good men
Whose faith offends the King;
Though he loves this gallant soldier, when
He deems him heretic, ah, then,
The royal oath, by tongue or pen,
Like sounding brass doth ring!

Long lowered the clouds that now have burst,
A storm of cruel strife,
That sweeps men forth, as things accursed,
Their homes abandoned, friends dispersed,
France in an ocean of grief immersed;
A price on human life!

Louis the King! His name is dear
To loyal hearts in France;
Though he rules the land by the might of fear,
Though his laws are stringent and severe,
Yet his subjects like a god revere
His every word and glance.

But the wisest of kings is still a man!
When woman seeks to rule,
He leaves his throne for the soft divan,
He breaks his oath at the flirt of a fan,
(So has it been since this world began!)
A king,— and yet, a fool!

This King (you may read the story through
In many an ancient tome)
Has broken his word to his subjects true;
And many a year and day shall he rue
The men and women who then withdrew
From country, and from home!

“ In the bosom of the Holy See
Alone is peace and rest!
Abjure your sin of heresy,
And you and yours are forever free
To spend your lives right merrily,
With wealth and honor blest! ”

The Huguenot has a heart of might;
He seeks his mountain home;
In the darkest hour of a winter night,
With his face stern-set in the candle-light,

The Fields of Peace

He looks his last on his loved birth-right,—
An exile, far to roam!

Out through the gate of the old chateau
His steed flies swift and sure;
Behind him he hears the feet of his foe;
The sound on his ear strikes a deadly blow;
It rings on the stones with a dread echo —
“Abjure! Abjure! Abjure!”

Now with him there rides a slim young page,
All drest in doublet brown;
A wisp of the russet foliage,
Fast flying before the tempest’s rage,
Forced rudely from its deep boskage,
Trembling and fluttering down

Is not more frail a thing to face
The wrath of angry wind,
Than is this slender page, whose grace
Doublet and hose cannot efface;
But the keenest eye can discern no trace
Or sign of coward mind.

How swift are the good steeds in their flight!
The riders, how serene!
They comfort their hearts in the solemn night
With words of cheer, and laughter light;
For the brown eyes of the page shine bright —
He shows no spirit mean!

They have left far behind the troopers grim;
They ride for life and love!

Almost they have gained the forest's rim,
(The little page, he is chanting a hymn!)
When a shot rings out from the shadows dim—
Now, shield them, God above!

The heart of the man in his bosom quakes;
He sees the slender lad
Shrink and tremble. The rein he takes
And urges the steeds, till the silence breaks
To turmoil, and each hoofbeat makes
A sound like music mad.

As the sweet red sunrise tints the east,
A moment they must rest,
For faint and weary are man and beast;
But not for long has the wild race ceased!
Now the Huguenot, his fears increased,
Spies on his page's vest

A mark where the ball has pierced the pile
And traced a blackened trail;
"Behold!" said the page, with a wistful smile
(Dark eyes uplifted, free from guile),
"Our God hath spared my life awhile!"
The Huguenot turns pale

As the page draws out from his doublet-breast
A book, with leaves all torn;
To his panting bosom the lad he pressed,
And tears stream forth, too long repressed;
Then down they kneel, and thanks addressed
To God, that winter morn.

“ Be of good cheer, dear heart! For God
Will surely lend us aid!”

Then faster and faster the horses trod;
They are leaving behind the forest sod —
Well for them that their steeds are shod
For highway, as for glade!

Ride! Ride! Hear the flint and stone
Ring 'neath the flying feet!
No backward glances, nor fretful moan,
For fortune lost, and for exile lone
In foreign land, tho' the heart be prone
To ache, its doom to meet!

At length they come to a frontier town,
Which opens its friendly gate;
“ Good seigneur, your dainty page in brown
Hath a fragile look! He is no clown!
(The Huguenot listens with a frown)
You chose a goodly mate!”

Thus spoke the men at the city wall,
Laughing, with eyes alert.
The page felt his timid glances fall,
And turned his face from the sight of all
That merry throng. But his master's call
'Suages the heart's vague hurt.

“ Let the lad abide in peace! Your jest
Befits not gentlemen;
I ride at our royal King's behest;
I stay not for food nor for needed rest,

Nor linger here to be your guest,
Nor pass this way again!"

"Parbleu! Can you be of that cursèd band
Of traitorous Huguenots,
Whose stiff-necked pride has filled this land
With strife and bloodshed? Our King's command
Is strict, with sword and fiery brand
To deal them deadly blows!"

From his pouch the brave Bartolomée
Draws out a precious scroll.
"This royal order you must obey,
Louis the King takes no man's nay!
My mission is not a foolish play,
I pledge you, on my soul!"

'Tis a goodly parchment, all bedight,
Stamped with the royal seal;
It serves him well in this awkward plight,
For the townsmen, beholding its gilding bright,
Stand aloof with a sudden fright
That mitigates their zeal.

"Your guardsman's dress proclaims your rank;
Our King's will is our own!"
A touch of the spur on each horse's flank,
A scramble along the river's bank,
(Forsooth, this is no schoolboy prank!)
And the Huguenots have flown!

Across the border where safety lies,
They seek their happy goal;

As in a vision, with wistful eyes
See they the star of their destiny rise,
To glow and shine in southern skies,
Where Virginia's rivers roll?

The Huguenot cries to his page so brave:
“ Suzanne, my sweetest wife!
With courage sublime your word you gave
The faith of mine ancient name to save
Tho' your body should fill a martyr's grave —
Thou bright star of my life!”

From the panting steed she springs to his arms.
Forgotten her page's dress,
Forgotten the terrors of war's alarms,
With all its dread attendant harms;
Once more her frozen heart she warms,
And feels love's dear caress.

Though exiles now from a country dear,
Together they kneel low,
And strengthen their hearts from anxious fear,
To bear their lot with humble cheer,
For the promise of hope shines bright and clear,
That gladness they shall know!

Long was the life of that Huguenot pair,
In a land beyond the sea;
They founded a home in a country fair;
They taught their children to do and to dare,
With strength and courage and honor rare,
For faith and liberty!

THE BALLAD OF "GIPSY SMITH"

He was only a little gipsy lad,
Slender and dark, and strangely clad.

His kerchief, tied with careless grace,
Matched the red in his smooth young face;

Wild was the gleam of his faun-like eyes,
As he stood abashed, in mute surprise,

Where the music swelled in solemn strain,
And the peace of God filled the humble fane.

There bowed in worship a silent throng;
Sweet voices rose in a lilting song,

That told a story of wondrous love,
Of Jesus, who dwelt in realms above.

But nobody welcomed the gipsy boy —
Nobody told him that tale of joy!

Somewhere, from out the vast unknown,
Like a leaf on the wind that is idly blown,

A thought of God had drifted in
To a gipsy camp, midst its tawdry sin.

GOD! Who was God? Where did he dwell?
The stars in their courses could not tell;

The breeze that swept the heathery plain,
The yellow sunlight, the silvery rain,

The birds that sang to the dawning day,
The flowers that blossomed along the way;

None of these beautiful things beguiled
The seeking soul of the gipsy child.

Not even the mother-love came back
From its hurried flight o'er a boundless track,

To still the ache of her young son's heart,
Or knowledge of God to her tribe impart.

(For in ragged tent, as in queenly bower,
A mother's love is the secret power

That spans the gulf 'twixt heaven and hell,
And standeth a sleepless sentinel!)

“ He is only a gipsy! ” somebody said ;
An old man shook his grizzled head,

And curled his lip in silent scorn
Of one so alien, so meanly born.

The hot blood flushed his tawny cheek
As the urchin heard the old man speak ;

A strange wild thrill in his bosom stirred
And sprang to life at the cruel word :

For in the frame of that gipsy lad
Slumbered the will of a Galahad !

Who knoweth what Sangreal vision bright
Quivered and gleamed in the misty light?

Or what glimpse of glory filled his soul
And turned his feet toward a shining goal?

Brave in the strength of innocent pride,
He crossed the aisle with boyish stride,

And kneeling, lifted his eyes' dark fire,
Sweet with the passion of high desire:

“Christ Jesus — you'll have to take me, now!
Nobody else wants me!” . . . the gipsy's vow

To Christ; who answered his yearning cry,
Rang through the vaults of Heaven high;

Around the world it echoes still,
And moves men's hearts with magic thrill.

For God came down to that chapel bare,
And claimed His own, for service rare.

(One dark-browed mother, dying, gave
A ray of light from her lonely grave!)

Now, praises to God be manifold,
Who turneth the tinsel to purest gold!

For that vagrant gipsy, the tinker's son,
Thousands of souls to Christ hath won!

SIR GALAHAD

Sir Galahad, Sir Galahad,
Long years have sped
Since you lay dead;
The Holy Grail hath vanished
From mortal sight;
Pale is the light
That shone o'er Camelot's towers bright.

No more is heard the martial sound
Of knights who ride
In boastful pride,
With their good weapons fitly tried
In many a bout
With foes in rout,
In tournaments, midst song and shout.

No more in joust their spears they break;
Mute is the plea
Of chivalry
That echoed once o'er hill and lea;
No more are seen,
'Neath branches green,
Sweet maidens clad in garments sheen.

Yet ofttimes, fair Sir Galahad,
As in a dream
We catch the beam
Of wistful, yearning eyes a-gleam;
On some young face
Thine image trace,
White with the Sangreal's mystic grace!

THE VISION OF EVE

Poor outcast Eve! She sees the two-edged sword
That flames o'er Eden fair!
She shrinks and trembles, when Jehovah, Lord,
Walks in the Garden there.

Hers are the first tears mortal ever shed;
Hers the first sighs of grief;
Hers the first blush of shame, that coursing red,
Burns deep, without relief,

All her sweet body that, divinely pure,
Hath graced the flowery dales,
Unconscious of the hidden deadly lure,
Secrete in Eden's vales!

And not the least of new-found misery,
These craven words she hears:
“The Woman that Thou gavest unto me”
(Hears she the Serpent's jeers?)

“She gave me of the Tree”—so said the Man—
“And I did eat!” Forgive,
Jehovah, God, since 'twas Thy mighty plan
That thus our race should live!

Perchance 'twas love that wrought the direful
doom!
If she, by lifted hand
To pluck the fruit from out its od'rous bloom,
All knowledge could command,

And from the mystery of future life
Could wrest its veiled fate,
High as th' immortal gods, with powers rife,
Should stand her Heaven-sent mate!

• • • • •

Too late, she learns the pangs of deep regret,
Too late, reproach and fears!
With arms outstretched, all her fair tresses wet
With penitential tears,

See our First-Mother, as she bows and kneels
To her offended God!
Trembling beneath a load of guilt, she feels
The sting of th' chastening rod!

Oh, piteous spectacle! With sad eyes dim,
Outside of Eden's gate,
Abashed before the fiery Cherubim,
In dumb despair she waits!

Her dear-bought knowledge — what a bitter taste
On lips with honey fed!
With vision blurred, across the desert waste
Sees she, aghast, one dead —

Stark on the flinty ground, rigid and grim,
Flesh of her flesh, her pride?
A strange and unknown Thing, with bleared eyes
dim,
Bright hair in blood red-dyed?

Sees she one fleeing from the face of God,
With glazed sight staring wide?
Was there no depth beneath the barren sod
A brother's blood to hide?
.

In sorrow to conceive, in pain to bear,
In bitterness to rear,
Through nights of weariness and days of care,
The end — this form of Fear!

On thy frail shoulders must this awful crime,
Poor Eve, be laid in vain?
Nay, from thy mother-love shall spring, sublime,
Some balm for all thy pain!

Oh, Mother Eve, shudder that sight to see!
Fairest of fair wert thou
In Eden's groves! Alas, what pain to thee
That beauteous body now!

Low in the dust, where trails that sinuous shape,
Loathsome, with pois'rous fangs,
Dread symbol of the enemies agape,
Shall mock thy bitterest pangs!

Forever and forever, through the years
Dark with unnumbered woes,
In grief and agony, with scorching tears,
Woman shall face her foes;

Bare her white shoulder to the lash of scorn,
Her smooth cheek meekly turn;

The Fields of Peace

In many a dreadful market-place, forlorn,
With shameful blushes burn;

Bear the harsh mockery of cruel smiles,
And laughter, light as breath;
Quiver 'neath hands whose faintest touch defiles,
Quick with the sting of death!

.

Lift thy fair head from out the dust, poor Eve!
The vision changeth now;
Bright gleams of rosy light the darkness cleave,
Suffusing thy pale brow.

Look: having suffered thy full meed of shame,
In some far-distant age
Thou shalt behold strong daughters of thy name
A wondrous conflict wage.

A vast, triumphant host, with measured tread,
Sweeping from zone to zone,
The strong, the weak, the humble, the high-bred,
Mysterious kinship own;

United in a bond of common zeal,
Their oriflamme they raise,
And, purged of petty weakness, seek to heal
Wounds old as Sin's black days.

Above the sighing of the Eden trees
Their songs sonorous swell;
Arise, sad Eve, and let that music ease
Thy heart, its fears to quell!

The Fields of Peace

For having lost thy garden, green and fair,
 The wilderness is thine,
To water with thy tears, to plant with rare
 Sweet flowers of love divine.

The hand that plucked the bright, forbidden fruit,
 In gentle ministry
Shall tend each tiny bud, each tender shoot,
 Till thy posterity

Shall cause the barren wilderness to bloom
 A fragrant Eden-bower,
And the soft light of God's love shall illumine
 Earth's evening hour!

THE SIN EATER

Queenlike she lies, robed in new garments white,
All her soft hair a crown of burnished gold
Bound round her pallid forehead, fold on fold;
Close-shut the smiling eyes from the fair light
Wherein I grope, as in the darkest night!
Her slender fingers in their fragile hold
Clasp the grim symbol, mystical and old,
The morsel offered in this last, sad rite.

“Who eats this bread for all her sin atones!”
Who says that she was false as she was fair?
This tender flesh that wraps these rigid bones,
Have I not shielded it with lover’s care
From the world’s scorn? Yea, e’en at death’s dark
verge

My love-song drowns the mourners’ tuneless dirge!

Give me the bread! Dost think that I could fear
To take upon my soul, for this my dead,
My darling one, all deeds of secret dread,
All those frank sins that rendered her so dear?
E’en though throughout my darkened life I hear
A million curses hurtling o’er my head!
With lips that tremble not, I take this bread
Bitter to taste, sodden with many a tear!

Oh, love, thy soul mounts up to God, as free
As any bird that wings the summer sky;
For this my sacrifice, remember me,
When I in turn shall lay me down to die!
Thy sins, that on my heart I mutely bore,
Shall they not plead for me at Heaven’s bright door?

HONEYSUCKLES

As I was walking down the street still pulsing in the
humid heat,
A magic sweetness filled the air, where honey-
suckles bloomed;
The houses all stood straight and high, their tops
against the amber sky,
And o'er the distant wooded heights the purple
twilight loomed.

And as I walked, I met a girl, a shabby, tired work-
ing girl;
Her feet upon the sun-baked pave lagged all too
slow — too slow;
She looked at me with listless eye, her face it would
have made you cry,
For on her brow the brand of toil had fixed its
blighting show.

(Now I should premise, for a start, *mine* is no mel-
ancholy heart;
The dragon's not my brother, and I do not like
the owl!
Life has been kind to me, I ween; no harrowing
troubles have I seen,
And at my door the lean gray wolf was never
heard to howl!)

I spoke to her as fancy led, and these are just the
words I said:
“Oh, little maid, behind the wall the honey-
suckles run;

The Fields of Peace

We cannot see their blossoms white, the red bricks
 hide them from our sight,
But ah, the sweetness that they shed is free to
 everyone!

“ And so it is with life, I think; the cares from
 which we daily shrink
Oft hide a kindly blessing, like the honeysuckles’
 smell.”

She looked at me with sad, sad eyes; I saw a crystal
 tear-drop rise,
There came a chill upon my heart, as o'er her
 cheek it fell.

She answered not a single word, and yet within my
 heart there stirred
The passion of a pity that was keener far than
 pain;
In her eyes I saw the sorrows of life’s grim and
 dread to-morrows,
And the trembling of her pallid lips spoke meas-
 ureless disdain. . . .

I watched her as she went her way and vanished
 with the fading day,
Without a word, without a sign, yet tragic in her
 gloom;
And like the writing on the wall, I saw the dusky
 night-shades fall,
And deadly grew the odor of the honeysuckles’
 bloom!

“ INDIAN SUMMER ”

Oh, the woods are red with autumn on the far Missouri hills,
And the sunshine, veiled with vapors, all the mid-
land valley fills;
The orchard fruits are garnered, and the harvest
fields are bare—
Oh, to be in old Missouri, when 'tis Indian Summer
there!

In the woods the nuts are falling with a faint and
mystic sound,
Like the clash of fairy cymbals, as they tinkle on the
ground,
Making music for the dances of the drifting leaves,
afire
With the crimson and the scarlet in a glorious tan-
gle rare!

They are grinding out the cider in a thousand amber
streams;
The wild grapes hang in clusters, dark with red and
purple gleams;
The persimmon and the paw-paw spread their fra-
grance everywhere—
Oh, no season of the cycle can with Autumn's grace
compare!

The Fields of Peace

All the world is full of beauty; golden glories clothe
the land
In a robe of gorgeous splendor, stirred by breezes
soft and bland;
But 'neath earth's cerulean heavens nowhere is the
day so fair
As it is in old Missouri, when the Indian Summer's
there!

Oh, you exiles in far cities, don't you feel your pulses
stir
With a rush of loyal ardor, at this season of the year,
When amid the alien grandeur you a homesick mo-
ment spare,
To remember old Missouri, when 'tis Indian Sum-
mer there?

THE RED CROSS NURSE

I have turned aside from the world and its pride,
The strength of my love to prove;
I have set my pace to a wonderful race,
With feet that are swift to move —
Be it soon or late, to serve or to wait —
At the call of the terrified.

Through flood and flame, in the Master's name,
Comfort and help I bring;
My mission blest is to offer rest
And peace to the suffering;
I give no heed to rank or to creed;
I look not askance at shame.

The Fields of Peace

On the wreck-strewn trail of the howling gale,
I hasten with warmth and cheer;
O'er the shrouded head of the mangled dead
I bend with a pitying tear;
To famine's white lip my cup I slip;
I quiet the mourner's wail.

In the wake of the knell of hurtling shell,
The clangor of crashing steel,
My watch I keep where the wounded sleep,
And the dead lie heel to heel;
I speed the soul to its happy goal,
A tireless sentinel.

From East to West on my merciful quest
I follow the Red Cross far;
Under Southern skies I have seen it rise;
It glows 'neath the Northern star;
Its crimson sign is a badge divine,
My cognizance and crest.

A WOMAN OF FRANCE

She bound her hair in a golden braid and pinned her
kerchief white;
Her face was sweet with ruddy strength, her eyes
with joy were bright.

She took her babe from his cradle-bed and tied his
knitted shoon:
“I hear the tramp of our soldiers’ feet — they pass
this way at noon;

“Wake, little son, for thy father dear must see thy
face to-day!”
Then swift at the sound of the trumpet blast she
bore the babe away.

Lovely she stood mid the eager crowd, (her rapt
glance ran like flame
Seeking one face in the blue-bloused ranks) mur-
muring one name.

The babe laughed out in his infant glee and clutched
a banner’s fringe;
Blue, white and red, its shifting folds hid many a
bloody tinge!

Bearded and gaunt, with lips firm-set, young faces
so grave and old —
Not age, but pain its dread mark stamped on th’
front of those soldiers bold.

Pierre and Jean and Ramon Dupuy, Louis—all
friends of years,
They turned aside from that questing face. What
meant those sudden tears?

But one stepped out from the marching ranks and
bowed his grizzled head:

“ My girl, be brave, for thy country’s sake! — Thy
good man — he is dead!

“ Bravely he fell in the battle-front on Verdun’s
ghastly field;

Many there were to keep that tryst — but never a
man to yield!

“ Weep not, dear girl! Thy baby here hath a heri-
tage of fame;

Thine be the task to see that he keeps unstained that
honored name! ”

A moment she shrank from the cruel stroke, cold
’neath the blazing sun,

Then high o’er head in her strong young arms she
raised her little one

And held him there, like an oriflamme, a sign of
royal pride;

Her voice rang clear as a bugle’s note, and: “ *Vive
la France!* ” she cried.

Oh, happy France, when for thy dear sake thy
daughters offer up

The very blood of their loyal hearts, and drinking,
bless the cup!

Thrice happy thou, O land beloved! Soon may thy
sorrows cease,
Soon may thy flag float high and free, and thy chil-
dren rest in peace!

THE WHISTLER AND HIS DOG

Comrade of many a joyous hour,
What time I went by wood and stream,
Or, 'neath some shady sylvan bower,
Lay, wrapped in youth's elusive dream;
Here come we to the parting ways,
No more to wander, glad and free;
Another friend shall fill your days,
Whilst strange adventures beckon me.

If, on some distant battlefield,
Wounded and faint the Whistler lies,
May fevered fancy gently yield
A vision of your friendly eyes!
Above the noise of hurtling shell,
And shrapnel screaming in the dark,
Perchance he'll hear yon evening bell,
And the glad echo of your bark!

VICTORS OF THE MARNE

They say that scarlet poppies bloom and nod
In gay profusion o'er that shell-scarred plain
Where late the feet of wrestling armies trod,
And streams of crimson drenched the avid sod —
The blood of heroes for their country slain!

And for each scarlet poppy glowing there,
Flame-like, as on an altar richly spread,
We count, on beads of tears, a yearning prayer,
That on the day of Judgment, grand and fair,
The poor maimed bodies of the blessed dead

May rise, a shining host, all glory-clad,
And o'er the fields of Heaven ranging free,
Find each its shaven soul, that once it had,
Cleansed of the earth and all its mem'ries sad:
Dying, had they not deathless victory?

SONNETS
“IN ETERNAL MEMORY”

“IN ETERNAL MEMORY”

Father, beloved, whilst I was yet a child,
And all unskilled in life’s deceitful art,
Long ere my feet had trodden earth’s dull mart,
Beholding thee, so tender and so mild,
By taint of sin and wrong so undefiled,

I placed thine image in a niche apart,
Where, like a saint enshrined within my heart,
Its gracious presence curbed all passions wild.

Far-drifting years have circled o’er my head,
Since thou wert numbered with the holy dead,
Still thy dear likeness keeps its sacred place,
Unspoiled by flight of time; its peaceful face,
Serene and tranquil, daily grows more bright,
In the soft radiance of love’s clear light.

No fierce ambition stirred thy gentle soul,
Nor marred with vain regrets thy placid days;
Thine was the charm of quiet, shaded ways,
And the sweet recompense of love thy toll.
With eyes fast fixed on Heaven’s promised goal,
Which like a silver star shed its fair rays

Guiding thy steps along life’s tangled maze,

Thy spirit harbored naught of greed or dole.

Thy steadfast heart no guile nor anger knew;
Thy ministrations, like the manna-dew
That fed the hungry in the wilderness,
Cheered many a burdened soul; to heal, to bless,
A task supreme, ever thy life’s high aim,
Till in the midnight dim, thy summons came.

Not with alarm or fear, in that dark hour,
Like a poor slave that dreads his tyrant's call,
And looks on death as a most dismal pall,
Wherein the flitting soul doth shrink and cower,
Abashed before that stern and awful Power;
But as a home-returning heir receiveth all
The blest rewards that to the faithful fall,
Thy spirit passed to claim its blissful dower.

“Thou good and loyal servant, ever blest,
Enter thou into thy eternal rest!”
So having lived a life of humble trust,
And seen, with eyes of faith, beyond the rust
Of earth and time, thy treasures heaped above,
Thy soul hath perfect grown in God's great love.
December 11, 1916.

THE OLD HOUSE

As one, long humbled, gains a quiet grace,
And in decay becomes more gravely sage,
Its gray roof stained by many a storm, and age
Wrinkling its warped front, like a human face
Where Time hath set indelibly his trace,
The old house stood; despite of winter's rage,
A home where Love did dwell, a pleasant cage
Which little nestling found a happy place.

Now in my dreams I often visit there,
And by the hearthstone sit, and through the door

Look out upon the vistas, far and fair,
Radiant with summer's glow, or white with hoar.
And when the dream is fled, and I awake,
With what sweet longing doth my sad heart ache!

A SUMMER NIGHT

The ancient trees stand motionless, and still
Each drooping, folded leaf as if asleep;
The watchful stars their kindly vigil keep;
The wind across the distant purple hill
Scarce stirs the ripples of the tiny rill,
Whose silvery, glancing waves unruffled creep,
And through dank grasses sinking, softly seep,
The thirsty rootlets' hourly need to fill.

There darting fireflies flash their vivid light
Mid the dim shadows of the noiseless night,
And the sad whip-poor-will makes constant moan;
The evening planet with a soft light glows;
There floats the scent of the sweet brier-rose,
That blooms beneath the window-sill alone.

THE LITTLE WOOD

There is a little, leafy, wooded place,
Deep set within the forest's mighty verd,
Its silence broken by the warbling bird
That wings its happy flight through the green space,
Or stoops to drink at some low-murmuring race.
Through sun-shot dusk the dove's soft note is
heard ;
By fragrant winds the drooping leaves are stirred ;
There laughing Summer cools her flushed, sweet
face.

Oh, would that I might tread again that dell,
To pluck the purple heart's-ease from its bed !
There, taking comfort from each fluttering leaf
That dances as with mirth its joy to tell,
Life might become to me a thing less dread ;
A little while I might forget my grief !

“LORD, WHITHER GOEST THOU?”

Lord, whither goest thou? This path is steep
For feet unused to rough and stony ways!
See, far across yon valley's golden haze
A broad road winds, and murmuring waters creep
Along green fields where scarlet poppies sleep!
Lord, let me linger, if 'tis but to gaze
With wistful longing toward that shining maze
Where music soundeth, and no sad eyes weep!

Dear Master, look not on me with that glance
Commingled of rebuke and love supreme!
I will forego those pleasures, that entrance
My wayward senses, like a blissful dream,
To follow ever where thou leadest me. . . .
Yea, Lord, e'en though to darksome Calvary!

THE POTTER'S WHEEL

If, by the turning of the Potter's wheel,
A vessel unto honor made shall be
The consummation of my destiny;
If, like to gold, or silver, he anneal
And fashion this poor clay for earthly weal;
If in the House of Life the high decree
Doth place me there for uses glad and free,
Meet for the Master's service, wrought with zeal,
All blessed were my lot! But if, perchance,
Of dull brown earth, or wood, or common stone,
With naught of blazonry, or glint of gold,
The Potter's hand doth shape life's circumstance,
Shall not His wisdom and His love atone,
If thus I serve His purpose manifold?

“BEAUTY FOR ASHES”

Ah, me! how terrible and strange
This life of ours, wherein we see
Enwrought so much of misery!
So many evil things that range
Our gladsome world, and straitly change
To wails our choicest songs of glee!
But shall we question God's decree,
And tremble, lest harsh thoughts estrange
Us from His gracious love and care?
Behold, what flowers of beauty rare
God in his mercy makes to grow
From the dead ashes of our woe!
And from the sackcloth's rough embrace
Fashions for us garments of praise!

O LORD, SEND PEACE!

O Lord, send peace! Behold what deeds of shame
Stain Thy fair lands with blood and fire and
crime!

War's deadly fury drowns the peaceful chime
Of Christmas bells ringing Thy holy name;
The far horizons glow with crimson flame;
But no angelic hosts, with songs sublime,
Greet those sad watchers in the frozen rime,
Too sad for words to utter — “Whose the blame?”

The little children's wails, the widows' tears,
The ruined homes, once gay with youthful mirth,
The sacrifice of nations' fruitful years,—

All call upon Thee from this groaning earth:
Have pity, Lord, for all the grief that sears
This sacred day that celebrates Thy birth!

December, 1914.

HINC ILLÆ LACHRIMÆ

One writes to me from out the distant West,—
Scarce can I comprehend the message dread,
Or read aright the words, “Our friend is dead!”
Gone, is she, to that sweet and final rest,
Where she shall dwell forever as the guest
Of God? As I recall scenes vanishèd
Beyond the veil of Time, my thoughts are led
To greet in memory her I loved the best.

Full tender was thy gentle heart, and sweet,
And fragrant with the incense of kind deeds;
And all thy earthly life was full of love;
Thou with the soft voice of the woodland dove,
Worthy wert thou our blessed ones to greet,
Who long have passed beyond earth’s utmost needs!

Dear friend of girlhood’s rosy, halcyon days,
Dost thou now look with pity, angel-wise,
From out the blue of Heaven’s eternal skies,
Regarding me, who still in toilsome ways
Must plod alone, glad of the sunset rays
Which oft my pathway dim do visualize
My dreams of that fair land, that Paradise,
Glowing beyond my raptured, trancèd gaze?

Oh, soon may dawn for me that morning fair
When I shall cast aside this mask of clay,
Which now doth hide from me that golden light
Which gilds thy face, across Death’s darkling
night;
Then shall we walk together, free from care,
Glad spirits, treading the Celestial Way!

MIRAGE

The gray and silent years, how still they stand,
Like haggard ghosts betwixt thy heart and mine!
Above each shrouded head pale haloes shine;
Roses lie withered in each shrunken hand;
And my dull life, that might have been so grand,
Sweet with fond hopes and rich with purpose fine,
Stretches around me without guide or sign,
A desert waste, a pathless, barren strand!

Love, beyond the desert's lonely spaces,
Lift up thine eyes, and look, if thou canst see
A mirage of young and ardent faces,
As when we fared together merrily,
Long ere we met those spectres of dead years,
Or felt the cold rain of regretful tears!

RECOMPENSE

To "J. D. B."

Have the slow years been empty of delight,
That, missing the one thing in life long sought,
Time's recompenses give unto thee naught
But the wan largess of contentment trite?
Or hast thou from them, in their hasty flight,
Wrested thy meed of joy, whilst thou hast
wrought
So nobly at thy task, and haply caught
Some radiance of the glory infinite?

In the soft eyes of Mem'ry seest thou
A bright reflex of many a glad day
Ere Care had set her imprint on thy brow,
And Love's sweet roses faded with the May?
This solace still the flitting years assure:
That good deeds, done with faith, fore'er endure!

STARSHINE

As when some fair star drifts beyond the ken
Of pensive eyes watching — but all in vain! —
To see it rise once more o'er hill and glen
Glorious mid th' effulgent heavenly train
Of myriad orbs that, thro' th' empyrean blue
In moonless midnight move with solemn pace,
And for a moment seem to weep, like dew,
Tears for the splendor of its vanished grace;
So have I seen some cherished friendship glow,
Starbright, above my life's horizon rim,
And wept because its soft rays, sinking low,
Have left my world in sudden twilight dim:

Nor found I any joy that its pure light
Illumes the darkness of far orient night.

BALLADS AND SONGS OF THE
SOUTHLAND

SEMPER FIDELIS

The sword and spear that in brave hands, and
strong,
In vengeance wrought their tale of blood and
doom,
And thro' dark days of sorrow, tears and gloom,
Flashed o'er our land, red harbingers of wrong;
Stilled to dumb silence youth's most gladsome song;
Shattered to barren wastes fields once abloom
With buds and flowers, that in war's deadly
spume
Withered and died, (as died our hopes, ere long!) ;

These instruments of war thine eyes now see
Shaped to the usages of peaceful toil;
The pruning hook that crops the fruitful tree,
The plough that sharply turns the dusky soil,
Oh, may they ne'er desert their kindly arts,
Snatched by bold hands to pierce our tranquil
hearts!

Oh, well may children's children of thy land
Weep for the deeds and glory of their race!
Triumphant warriors! Their names we trace
In Fame's clear heaven, a constellation grand,
Still shining from afar, a radiant band;
Nor hate, nor malice shall one star efface,
Nor dim the splendor of their warlike grace,
Where, like the clustering Pleiades they stand!

From their high courage, and their steadfast hope,

We, too, may learn life's battle-shocks to meet;
Whilst with a host of unseen foes we cope,

And all the future looks one black defeat,
So out of seeming failure (e'en as they),
We glimpse the dawning of God's perfect day!

Forever loved and honored be *thy* name,

Who, when the fires of youth burned softly
bright,

Embraced with ardent zeal the cause of Right,
And thro' long years of battle, and of shame,

(Because thy country's foes her strength did maim,

And in their cruel triumph mocked her plight)

Hath struggled hard to end the bitter fight,
And fratricidal strife and pride to tame;

Now that old flames of passion flicker low,

And foes once more in brotherhood have met,
May thine uplifted eyes discern the glow

That sweetest shines when the red sun is set;
And as thy land beloved once more hath rest,
So may thy closing days with peace be blest!

And if sad Memory sometimes turns her gaze

Adown the years that lie, like autumn leaves,

Bright on thy threshold, see thy spirit grieves

No more, nor mourns its dear, lost days.

Lost? Nay, but pluck them for thy crown of bays!

Or bind them in a wreath of bearded sheaves,

That stalk by stalk, its fragrant fruitage weaves,

A beauteous whole, outstretched, a golden maze!

So when the Reaper, with his sickle keen,
At dewy morn, or in the blazing noon,
Comes with swift steps thy fertile fields to glean,
Thou shalt not fear to seek thy rightful boon;
But, constant in thy small, as mighty tasks,
Eternal rest thy faithful service asks.

To Hilary A. Herbert,
on the occasion of his
seventy-ninth birthday,
March 12, 1913.

“SUNSET AFTER APPOMATTOX”

’Tis done! The fateful words are said!
Furled is that flag for which men died,
For which in streams their blood they shed;
From many a vale and mountain-side
On it they turned their glazing eyes,
And blest it with their dying sighs.

Where the sad Appomattox slips
Through wooded banks, with murmured flow,
The hosts of Lee with trembling lips
Whisper his name, then turn to go
Toward ruined homes, and hearts that bleed
With anguish, in this hour of need!

Homeward the soldier takes his way,
With lagging step and mournful pace;
Beneath his tattered coat of gray
His heart lies cold; his warworn face

The Fields of Peace

Is set in lines of stern despair,
Where once Youth smiled, all debonair.

No clouds of war, no battle smoke,
Dim the sweet sunset's rosy light,
Where, seated on a storm-rent oak,
The great Commander rests, till night;
His faithful war-horse by his side,
Stands near him, still alert with pride.

Alone! What visions throng and press
Across the mirror of his soul?
Traced in dark lines of bitter stress,
Do serried ranks of battle roll?
Or sees he, in that solemn hour,
A vision of God's wondrous power?

With eyes that pierce beyond the gloom,
Beyond the wreck of hopes now dead,
Beyond those bright rays that illume
With roseate hues that grand gray head,
Perchance he sees the new day rise,
Flashing athwart the Southern skies!

THE SPIRIT OF THE SOUTH TO HER DEAD HEROES

I am the spirit of that land, beloved and glorious,
For which you died;
I watched and wept, whilst hand to hand, fiery, vic-
torious,
You stood, with pride

On many a hard-won battlefield; midst anguish,
pain and death,
And cannon's roar,
'Mid hurtling shell, I saw you yield with joy your
latest breath,
A precious store!

Your women and your children dear, you kissed
them, and away
With eager heart
You turned, to face long years and drear, peril, de-
feat, delay,—
The soldier's part.

And 'twas not honor and bright fame, nor warrior
rank and power
Alone you sought,
When by the camp-fire's ruddy flame, at midnight's
lonely hour,
Brief rest you caught;

Dreaming of home, of loved ones sweet (mothers at
prayer, who kneel
With outstretched arms,

The Fields of Peace

And eyes whose piteous glances fleet the brooding stars reveal,
With sick alarms;

Who hear in every breeze of morn the noise of clashing blades,
In deadly fray;
The music of the bugle horn in dim and distant glades,
At break of day;

Seeing in every sunset's blaze the fires of burning homes,
Where sad hearts break;
Loving, as only mothers love, the soldier-boy who roams!)
Asleep, awake,

These were the visions that endured through days of want and care,
And sore distress;
This was the glory that inured your strength to do and dare,
In hard duress.

Oh, never more let foeman's voice cry out in angry scorn,
Mocking your woes!
Forever let the world rejoice, till Resurrection's morn
All feuds shall close,

The Fields of Peace

Seeing that out of pain and strife your courage rose
sublime,

Each shock to meet;

That through the dusk of failures rife your stainless
honor's prime
Brooked not defeat!

Oh, weep no more your soldier-dead, land of my
pride and love!

Their sleep is sound.

Pure as the marble at the head, bright as the skies
above

Each lonely mound,

Their spirits animate our trust, their brave deeds
ring afar,

From South to North;

Treasures that know nor moth nor rust, flowers no
frost can mar,

Priceless their worth!

THE HOUSE WHERE STONEWALL JACKSON DIED

Mid fair Virginia's gently swelling plains,
Where once the roar of battle shook the hills,
Unique amongst all consecrated fanes,
Quaint with a beauty that inspires and thrills,

There stands a little house, with roof-tree low,
And white walls gleaming 'neath the summer
skies.

By what swift magic does it bring the glow
Of rev'rent wonder to our eager eyes?

“Whose is that humble cot?” I asked of one;
And with a glance of ardor he replied,
In the soft speech that marks the Southland's son:
“*That is the house where Stonewall Jackson
died!*”

Then I bethought me of that mournful day
When over all this smiling, happy land
The darkness of a tragic sorrow lay,
As “Stonewall's” sword fell from his stricken
hand.

When from the field they bore their hero-chief,
His blood-stained warriors wept with bitter rage;
His dying eyes saw through the mirk of grief
Green trees of Heav'n, with verdant foliage.

The Fields of Peace

“ Let us pass over the River ”— he sighed,
“ And rest under the shade — the shade of the
trees ! ”

As he had lived, most valiantly he died,
With childlike faith in God’s divine decrees.

In vain we questioned through the long, sad years,
Why the just God of battles willed it so,
And heeded not the anguish and the tears,
And the sick hearts that shrank beneath that blow.

But as the smoke of conflict cleared away,
And sweet-browed Peace came with her message
blest,
Slowly we learned to lift our eyes, and say :
“ Thy way, O God, not ours — for Thine is
best ! ”

So, little house beside the dusty road,
Cherish for aye the memory and the pride,
So strangely by an unseen Power bestowed,
Dear little house, where Stonewall Jackson died !

THE LAST REVIEW

1917

Oh, now, honey, don't say that!
I've simply got to go!
I don't care if the sun is hot!
I don't care if it rains, or not —
I'll wear my old gray hat!

Why, all the "boys" will be right there
Marching in that Parade!
The brave old Johnny Rebs! They say
Some Yanks, even, are going to play —
'T will be a grand affair!

Of course, I'm not so very spry,
Not like in sixty-one!
I'm old and lame, my suit ain't nice,
(I wore it when I fought with Price)
But I've got one good eye —

I want to see them blamed old Yanks
Along the Avenue!
They aren't so bad! A Rebel yell,
And how they used to run, pell-mell!
We played 'em lots of pranks!

Your Grandma said I was too young
To join the boys in gray;
When they came marching through the town,
I got my Pa's old rifle down
From where it always hung,

Above the chimney-place. Ma cried,
And so did Little Sis!
But I just had to go. . . . A man
Has got to do the best he can
To save his manly pride!

I kissed them both good-bye, and went
Away with Price's men.
Missouri's sons had sprung to arms,
From city streets, and lonely farms,
They joined our regiment.

When, worn with conflict and defeat,
Outnumbered two to one,
We scattered from the old Brigade,
On many a Southern field we made
Amends for old retreat.

At red Shiloh, in sixty-two,
I served with Beauregard;
For two days, in that ring of fire,
Comrade and friend I saw expire,
Dying like heroes true.

But I got shot in that grim fight,
And laid by for awhile;
Then, afterwards, in sixty-three,
I journeyed South and went with Lee,
Beloved and blameless knight!

Down South, I met your lovely Ma,
My own Evalina!

With one glance from her dark blue eyes,
She took my whole heart for a prize!

Pretty! I never saw

A prettier girl! And she cried, too,
And said her heart would break!
But still. . . . I went away with Lee!
The Captain of a company,
I'd sworn to see him through!

I saw great "Stonewall" when he fell;
I shared the bitter woe
That swept the hearts of all the corps,
As break the waves from shore to shore,
In a great ocean-swell.

At Gettysburg, along the James,
The Crater, Richmond dear,
Slowly the mournful end drew nigh;
We saw our dauntless soldiers die—
How glorious their names!

When in that black night of despair,
The Starry Cross went down,
The face of our loved leader shone,
A new star in the dusk, alone,
Serene, and bright, and fair.

"We've fought through th' war together, men!
I've done my best for you!"
A noble chieftain to the last,
We wept around him as he passed
Sadly adown the glen. . . .

Marse Robert! Ah, we loved him! Still
This old heart feels the glow
That burned in each young soldier's breast,
As, day by day, we forward pressed,
Eager to do his will!

Honey, your young heart cannot know
How terrible it was,
To watch our ragged, broken ranks,
Along the Appomattox' banks,
Surrendered to the foe!

'T is true, our enemies were kind
On that sad April day!
Their silent chieftain, calm and grave,
Had due respect for warriors brave,
And showed a gen'rous mind.

• • • • •

Well, God knew best! . . . Your Grandma said,
When I came tramping home:
"Son, put away the old gray coat,
And wait until you've had *one* vote!
You are too young to wed!"

But four hard years of storm and stress
Had taught me patience, too!
We all had need of courage strong,
To save our land from deadly wrong,
Our people from duress!

The Fields of Peace

Now, God be thanked, our task is done!
We've proved our loyalty!
If foreign foes our land bestead,
The son of many an old Confed
Will "stand behind the gun."

Listen! I hear the drums, the fife —
The bugle's silver call!
Oh, comrades, comrades, brave and true,
We meet in this our Grand Review,
In th' twilight hour of life;

And though we falter on the way,
With feeble steps and slow,
Dim eyes will brighten through the tears,
Old hearts beat bravely mid the cheers
That greet our Boys in Gray!

THE BLOCKADE RUNNER

It was the *Carolina*, from Bermuda, in the South;
She hoisted high the Stars and Bars and left the
harbor mouth,

A long, low, side-wheel steamer, loaded down with
contraband,
Bound across the sunlit ocean for her loved, be-
leaguered land.

Oh, a brave man was her captain, and brave men
made her crew,
For it takes stout-hearted seamen to run the block-
ade through.

And brave, too, were the women who risked their
lives to sail
On this outlawed, rebel steamer, with the Yankees
on her trail.

She has left the land behind her, the green billows
sweep ahead;
At night beneath the glowing stars her smoke-stacks
flame, blood-red.

By day beyond her mast-head a trail of black smoke
streams,
And where her gray hull plows the deep the glanc-
ing seaweed gleams.

It is gay upon the ocean as we breast the racing
foam,
Till far across the breakers shine the beacon lights
of home!

But watchful Yankee cruisers lying close along the
bar,
Swoop like hungry birds of prey sighting carrion
from afar.

Looming dimly in the dawn, sails wide-spread, they
circle near;
We can see their rockets' trail 'gainst the dark line
of Cape Fear.

Oh, it was a merry chase — shot and shell flew thick
and fast,
Fell like hail upon the deck, till the sailors stood
aghast.

As the *Carolina* swerved, “Lighten ship!” the cap-
tain cried;
And the crew began to cast bales and bundles o'er
the side.

Then the women wept to see such a direful sacrifice,
For the *Carolina* bore secret treasures, beyond price.

There was a girl amongst them, a fair, young, gentle
maid,
Cool mid the heat of battle, calm, heroic, unafraid.

Loudly over the tumult she could hear the captain's call:

“They've got us, lads, I fear me — shall we let the colors fall?”

The crew, a-fright, made answer “Yes!” He turned, but in his path

Stood this fearless Southern maid, eyes ablaze with holy wrath.

High she held a flaming torch, and she spoke with hurried breath:

“If you dare to touch that flag, *this* shall be your guide to death!

“Those stores of precious bounty were meant to aid our soldier-braves —

Before they shall be taken I will sink them 'neath the waves!

“Rather shall this torch be plunged in yon powder's cold black mass,

And our souls, for country's honor, to our God in glory pass!”

Oh, but she was fair of face! and her courage rose sublime;

Her sweet voice pierced the turmoil like a far-off, silvery chime.

She seemed, that pallid maiden, with her fiery torch held high,

An angel, sent from heaven; and the weary sailors cry:

The Fields of Peace

“Never shall our colors fall at the enemy’s best!”

Back they spring to gun and yard, valor burning in each breast.

With eager hands they speed the ship through the flying scud and spray;

Fast and faster still she flies, and they hear the captain say:

“Boys, we’ll take our chances now!” then with skill they clear the bar,

While the sullen foemen send one last shot, that strikes a spar.

But what matters that to her? A bold blockade runner, she

Rests within the port of Home, with her flag still flying free!

BILL STUBBS, OF NORFOLK

Bill Stubbs, of Norfolk, he up an' said
(A-standin' on a fence he was) :
" I'll stand by my colors, cap'n! I promised Sis!
An' you-all fellows may be sure of this —
I'll stand by my colors till I'm dead! "

That was just before the end had come;
" Marse Bob " was sorely pressed;
There was talk of trouble and of woe,
And some men said as they would go
Back to their folks, at home.

I tell you, friend, 'twas an awful day
For us boys who was followin' Lee!
So tired we slept as we marched along;
There was no more laughin', no more song;
Nobody had a word to say.

Our feet they was bare, and mighty sore!
We hadn't eat a bite all day!
An' I saw the boys all so bent and worn,
Their old gray jackets stained and torn,
An' a sight was the hats they wore!

An' some, they took an' dropped out o' rank,
'Cause rations was so mighty sca'ce —
A drink of water and a bit o' dry bread,
An' a stone on the ground, for to lay yo' head,
Und'neath a brush heap, or a bank.

The Fields of Peace

But Bill Stubbs, of Norfolk, we-all heard him
say,
A-standin' an' a-wavin' of his hand:
" My dear little sister, she's that brave,
She'd rather see me cold in my grave,
Than to go a-straggling off that a-way!"

So we went a-pladdin' on, 'cause, friend,
We-all said that Lee knew best.
Though we wept when he furled the Stars and
Bars,
Yet we felt thro' the sting of unhealed scars,
We had " stood by our colors," to the end!

THE HOME LAND

Oh, the home land is the land we love!
Gray are the skies that brood above
The drifting snows of the hardy North,
Where from midland and seashore we hurry forth,
On the path where honor and duty lead,
To a stricken world in its bitter need;—
 But the home land —
 Our dear land —
The home land is the land we love!

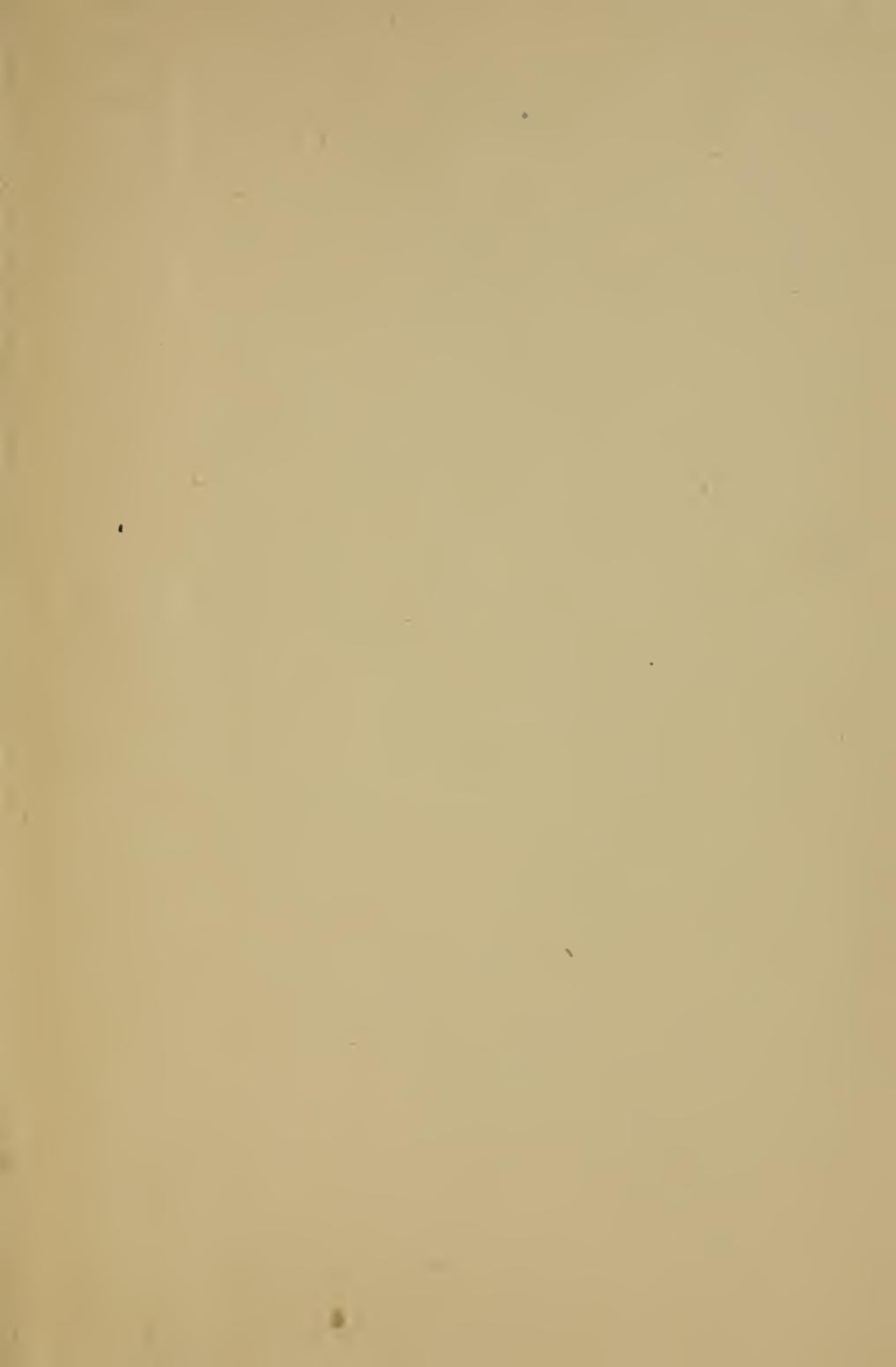
Where the moonlight falls in golden gleams
Over orange groves and whispering streams;
Where the mockingbird in the jasmine bowers
Chants of love through the drowsy hours,
Sons of the men who wore the gray,
Rank on rank, we have marched away
 From the home land,
 The dear land;
Oh, the home land is the land we love!

From mountain and desert, from ranch and plain,
From search for pleasure and hope of gain;
From mine and from forest, from river and hill,
The men of the West — they are coming still.
Ours is the faith of a glorious prize
That we see in the future, with steadfast eyes,
 For the home land,
 Our dear land;
The home land, the land we love!

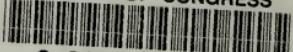
The Fields of Peace

When we've looked our last on the clear home lights,
As the troop ship glides through the solemn nights;
Should we feel in the dark the stealthy blow —
The thrust of a savage and cruel foe —
Calmly we'll die, if need there be,
And our young lives offer for Liberty
 And the home land,
 The dear land —
For the home land is the land we love!

If, braving all perils by shell and fire,
We see the end of our long desire,
And look with pride on a world restored
By the might of our swift avenging sword;
With a sigh for our dead in their lonely graves,
We'll steer our course o'er the bounding waves,
 To the home land,
 Our dear land —
Our home land — the land we love!



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